

## REPLACEMENT ABSTRACT

A method for increasing the hardness of silica/rubber mixtures ~~is disclosed wherein the method comprises~~ includes blending with ~~said~~ the mixture at least one silane and a hardness-increasing amount of at least one member selected from the group consisting of thixotropic fumed silica[[;]], precipitated silica[[;]] ~~and~~ an MQ resin, wherein Q is SiO<sub>4/2</sub>, M is R<sup>1</sup>R<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup>SiO<sub>1/2</sub>, and R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, and R<sup>3</sup> are the same or different functional or non-functional organic groups[[;]], carbon black[[;]], a thermoplastic resin[[;]] ~~and~~ or a thermosetting resin.